



SENATE BILL 749: Modify Weight Limits for Farm Operations

2011-2012 General Assembly

Committee:	Senate Finance	Date:	May 10, 2011
Introduced by:	Sens. Rabon, Tucker, Rouzer	Prepared by:	Heather Fennell
Analysis of:	Second Edition		Committee Counsel

SUMMARY: *Senate Bill 749 exempts certain farm trailers from registration, restates the requirement that specified property hauling vehicles be registered for the maximum weight allowed; and increases the single and tandem axle weight limits for vehicles transporting specified products.*

CURRENT LAW: G.S. 20-51(6) includes several exceptions to the requirement that vehicles be registered if they use the highways of the State.

G.S. 20-88 sets out the registration fees for property hauling vehicles.

G.S. 20-118 sets out the weight limits applicable to vehicles using the highways of the State.

BILL ANALYSIS:

Section 1 of House Bill 749 amends G.S. 20-51, which lists the exceptions to the requirement that a vehicle be registered, to exempt any trailer or semi-trailer used by a farmer, his tenant, agent, or employee in transporting livestock, live poultry, animal waste, herbicides, fungicide, or seeds from the requirement of registration.

Section 2 of the bill amends G.S. 20-88, (which sets out the fees for property-hauling vehicles) to restate that any vehicle weighing greater than the usual weight limits set in G.S. 20-118(b) (due to a weight limit exception pursuant to G.S. 20-118 (c)(12), (14), or (15) for agricultural crops, aggregates, wood residuals, including wood chips, sawdust, mulch, or tree bark, raw logs, bulk soil, bulk rock, sand, sand rock, asphalt millings, or animal waste), shall:

- Be registered for the maximum weight allowed for the vehicle configuration.
- If driven in violation of this provision, be subject to the axle group penalties set in G.S. 20-118(e), and that the penalties apply to the amount by which the vehicle's maximum gross weight exceeds its declared weight.

Section 3 of the bill amends G.S. 20-118(c), exceptions to the State's weight limits, to:

- Authorize a light-traffic road weight exception for live poultry from a farm; and water, fertilizer, herbicides, fungicides, seeds, fuel, and animal waste to or from a farm by a farm vehicle.
- Authorize a single axle weight of 26,000 lbs. and tandem axle weight of 44,000 lbs. for vehicles transporting the following within 150 miles of the farm: meats or agricultural crop products transported from a farm to first market; livestock or poultry transported from their point of origin to a processing plant or first market; apples when transported from the orchard to the first processing or packing point; trees grown as Christmas trees from the field, farm, stand, or grove to first processing point; water, fertilizer, herbicides, fungicides, seeds, fuel, and animal waste transported to or from a farm by a farm vehicle.

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- Authorize a single axle weight of 26,000 lbs. and a tandem axle weight of 44,000 lbs., for wood residuals, including wood chips, sawdust, mulch, or tree bark, raw logs, bulk soil, bulk rock, sand, sand rock, asphalt millings, or animal waste

EFFECTIVE DATE: This act becomes effective October 1, 2011, and applies to offenses committed on or after that date.

Giles Perry, counsel to Senate Transportation, substantially contributed to this summary.

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